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LYNNE M. ROSS  
*Executive Director*

April 12, 2005

PRESIDENT  
WILLIAM H. SORRELL  
*Attorney General of Vermont*

PRESIDENT-ELECT  
STEPHEN CARTER  
*Attorney General of Indiana*

VICE PRESIDENT  
THURBERT BAKER  
*Attorney General of Georgia*

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT  
BILL LOCKYER  
*Attorney General of California*

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bill Frist  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Congressional Leaders:

We, the undersigned Attorneys General, write to express our concern about the drastic cuts to the Crime Victims Fund proposed by the Administration in its budget for FY 2006.

The Crime Victims Fund was created as part of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA) and is funded entirely through collections from federal criminal fines, forfeitures and special assessments. These funds, with no additional amounts provided by taxpayer revenues, support the many VOCA programs that offer financial compensation and direct assistance services to victims of all types of crimes. Presently, some 4,400 local programs depend on VOCA assistance grants to provide necessary services to nearly 4 million victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, drunk driving, elder abuse and robberies, as well as families of homicide victims and other victims of crime.

The Administration's proposal for the FY 2006 budget to remove \$1.267 billion from the Crime Victims Fund would have a devastating impact on our ability to support victims of crime. VOCA is the only federal grant program that supports direct assistance services to victims of every description. VOCA also funds victim services for those involved in the federal criminal justice system and supplements state funds that provide financial compensation to victims of crime. While the Administration's proposal includes VOCA funding of \$650 million for FY 2006, it seeks to remove all other amounts remaining in the fund, as well as any amounts deposited during FY 2006. The Fund would thus begin FY 2007 with a zero balance. Beginning FY 2007 with nothing in the Fund means that there will be no money readily

available for state victim assistance and crime victim compensation grants or to pay federal personnel providing victim services.

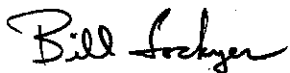
This approach is wholly inconsistent with the precise language of the statute which states that "... all sums deposited in the Fund in any fiscal year that are not made available for obligation by Congress in the subsequent fiscal year shall remain in the Fund for obligation in future fiscal years, without fiscal year limitation." 42 U.S.C. §10601(c). It also undermines the commitment, made in recent years when a cap was introduced on annual grants, "to ensure that a stable level of funding will remain available for these programs in future years." (Public Law 106-113, Conf. Report 106-479, Title VI, General Provisions, Sec. 620). Victims are challenged enough by their experiences. It would be an injustice to make the future of VOCA funding uncertain.

The proposed cut could not come at a worse time for states and territories. Significant budget problems still face state and territorial legislatures. VOCA funds enable states and community-based organizations to pay victim compensation and to offer free counseling, advocacy and a range of other specialized services for crime victims at a time when victims should not be further burdened by having to pay for such services themselves, or worse, forced to go without them. In many cases, the VOCA-funded services are lifesaving measures. Limiting the ability to offer these services will have devastating consequences.

We ask that you vote to restore the funds and assure the future availability of these monies to the Crime Victims Fund.

Thank you.

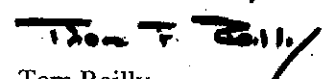
Sincerely,



Bill Lockyer  
Attorney General of California



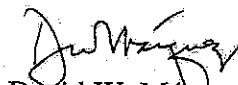
M. Jane Brady  
Attorney General of Delaware



Tom Reilly  
Attorney General of  
Massachusetts



Troy King  
Attorney General of Alabama



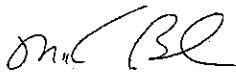
David W. Marquez  
Attorney General of Alaska

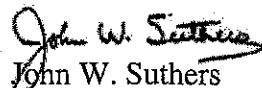



Malaetasi M. Togafu  
Attorney General of American Samoa

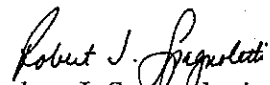



Terry Goddard  
Attorney General of Arizona

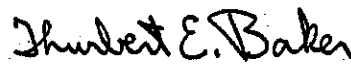
  
Mike Beebe  
Attorney General of Arkansas


  
John W. Suthers  
Attorney General of Colorado

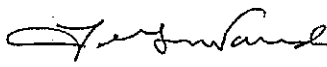
  
Richard Blumenthal  
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Robert J. Spagnoletti  
Attorney General of District of Columbia

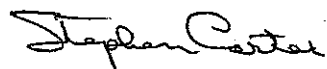
  
Charlie Crist  
Attorney General of Florida

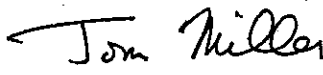
  
Thurbert E. Baker  
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Mark J. Bennett  
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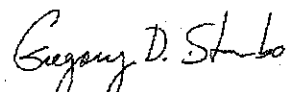
  
Lawrence Wasden  
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Lisa Madigan  
Attorney General of Illinois

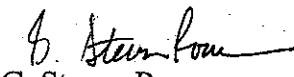
  
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Tom Miller  
Attorney General of Iowa


  
Phill Kline  
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Gregory D. Stumbo  
Attorney General of Kentucky

  
Charles C. Foti Jr.  
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G. Steven Rowe  
Attorney General of Maine

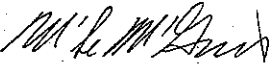
  
J. Joseph Curran Jr.  
Attorney General of Maryland

  
Michael A. Cox  
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Mike Hatch  
Attorney General of Minnesota



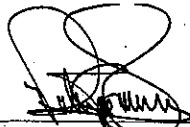
Jim Hood  
Attorney General of Mississippi



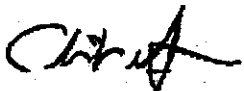
Mike McGrath  
Attorney General of Montana



Brian Sandoval  
Attorney General of Nevada



Peter C. Harvey  
Attorney General of New Jersey



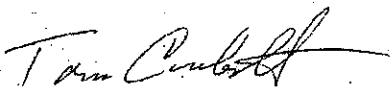
Eliot Spitzer  
Attorney General of New York



Wayne Stenehjem  
Attorney General of North Dakota



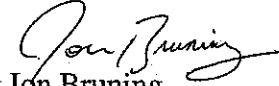
W.A. Drew Edmondson  
Attorney General of Oklahoma



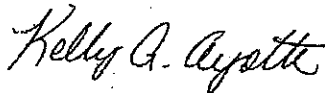
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Attorney General of Pennsylvania



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon  
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Jon Bruning  
Attorney General of Nebraska



Kelly Ayotte  
Attorney General of New Hampshire



Patricia A. Madrid  
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Roy Cooper  
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Jim Petro  
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Hardy Myers  
Attorney General of Oregon



Roberto J. Sanchez-Ramos  
Attorney General of Puerto Rico



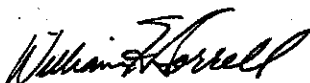
Patrick C. Lynch  
Attorney General of Rhode Island



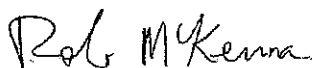
Lawrence Long  
Attorney General of South Dakota



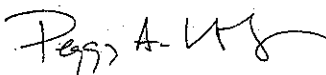
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Pamela Brown  
Attorney General of Northern  
Mariana Islands



Henry McMaster  
Attorney General of South Carolina



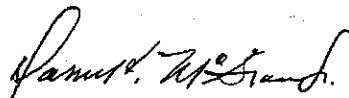
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Attorney General of Utah



Judith Williams Jagdmann  
Attorney General of Virginia



Darrell V. McGraw Jr.  
Attorney General of West Virginia



Patrick Crank  
Attorney General of Wyoming

cc: All Members of Congress